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Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4727th meeting

Thursday, 27 March 2003, 3.30 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Traoré	(Guinea)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Vassilev
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	Chile	Mr. Maquieira
	China	Mr. Jiang Jiang
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Mexico	Ms. García Guerra
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Sabbagh
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Thomson
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (S/2003/333)

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03-29770 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.50 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (S/2003/333)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Afghanistan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bazel (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, document S/2003/333.

The Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. I give him the floor.

Mr. Annabi: I am pleased to introduce the fourth report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan, as called for under Security Council resolution 1401 (2002) of 28 March 2002.

The Secretary-General's report describes the administrative, political and economic developments that have taken place over the past four months in the implementation of the Bonn Agreement on Afghanistan. I would like in this briefing to focus in a more general and thematic way on the challenges ahead in the implementation of the Agreement and on how the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) proposes to meet them.

UNAMA's focus over the next year will be to continue to assist the Afghan Government to consolidate its authority throughout the country and implement national policies that reach the entire nation. This effort will build on progress made last year in establishing the essential structures of Government and in proving that these structures can work at a basic level. Building on these foundations will require enhancing administrative capacity, carrying out security sector reform and furthering the political transformation towards representative Government. But, as Mr. Brahimi has frequently said in this Council and as the Secretary-General has made clear in his report, we cannot take these basic structures for granted. They must be further consolidated, expanded and legitimized. This will require the continued support of the international community.

The determination of the Afghan Government to take the leading role in rebuilding its State and the economy was clearly demonstrated during preparations for this year's national budget. The budget was presented to donors at the Afghanistan Development Forum held on 13 and 14 March in Kabul and at the Afghanistan High-Level Strategic Forum on 17 March in Brussels. The budget process saw Government ministries, with the support of the consultative groups comprised of international and donor partners, prepare and justify their expenditure plans, defend their proposals to their cabinet colleagues and accept final allocations on the principle of sustainability. The progress of all programmes will be measured against agreed benchmarks.

The Government sees the budget as its main policy-making instrument and as a mechanism to ensure that decisions on resource allocation are domestically led and have domestic ownership. The budget sets the role of the State as regulator and

guarantor of social well-being and enshrines the principles of geographic equity in the allocation of resources. The budget provides for some $2.26 billion in expenditure. The Government estimates that it will collect internal revenues of $200 million and donors have to date pledged $1.87 billion, leaving a funding gap of around $191 million in this year's budget.

At the heart of the budget process is the issue of government ownership and leadership in setting national priorities for the overall reconstruction agenda — in other words, of transforming an ad hoc system that developed during the years of civil war, when non-governmental organizations, the United Nations and other international organizations gradually assumed some State functions related to the delivery of services, into one where the State itself has the capacity to exercise its responsibility for national development.

The United Nations has supported this transformation, working with and within ministries to build their capacity and coordinating United Nations programme priorities with national programme priorities. The United Nations support in this regard builds on a generally successful effort over the past year to integrate United Nations agency programmes under the UNAMA umbrella. At the same time, UNAMA has stressed the Government's responsibility to ensure the effective use of the resources that it manages — many of them still provided by donors — by building capacity and preventing corruption. A number of delegates at the Brussels conference, which I mentioned earlier, also underlined the need for administrative reform in the public service.

In the Government's plan, reconstruction and economic development rest upon successful administrative reform. The national development programme lays out a clear role for the State over the long term. While the State will invest in human capital and implement social policies focused on assistance to the most vulnerable, it will take on a direct managerial role only when social justice demands it. The development plan otherwise calls for the reorientation of the State machinery to focus on policy and regulation, leaving implementation and growth to the private sector. The Administration recognizes that a robust private sector that provides sustainable development opportunities is ultimately the most effective way to improve the conditions of the majority of the population and to stabilize the revenue base of the national Government.

As the Secretary-General's report notes, the Government has already taken steps to effect this transformation, in particular through a successful currency exchange exercise; through staffing changes that better reflect the ethnic composition of the population; and through the establishment of a number of commissions, including on security sector reform, civil service reform, judicial reform, constitutional development and the promotion of human rights. Much more remains to be done, however, in particular as regards the reform of the civil service and of the judicial sector.

I believe that one of the most pressing challenges ahead for the Government of Afghanistan is to strengthen the links between Kabul and the provinces and to strengthen the capacity of the provincial and local governments themselves. Effective governance at the local level, with reliable fiscal, administrative and policy links to the central Government, will enable the population across Afghanistan to gain confidence that the Government can affect their lives positively. For this to occur, however, security outside Kabul must significantly improve.

In our briefings and reports to the Security Council, we have consistently stressed that the lack of security threatens the peace process at all levels and that the importance of security sector reform is therefore paramount. The Secretary-General's report in this regard is no exception. It describes developments in building the national army and police, the counter-narcotics effort, judicial reform and planning for demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programmes. It is important, however, to see security sector reform not as an end in itself but as a mechanism to enable the central Government to extend its control over the country and, in turn, to allow the interrelated political and economic development processes to occur within the space created by a functioning security sector. A multi-ethnic and accountable army and police will allow the State to provide the orderly environment required for the rule of law and the promotion and protection of human rights. The creation of an effective border police will ensure that customs revenues are collected by the central Government, thereby increasing its capacity and sustainability. The reform of the judicial system will allow for the rule of law, based on international covenants that Afghanistan has signed,

and incorporating principles grounded in gender equity and respect for human rights. The fight against illicit drugs will diminish the insidious effect of an illicit economy that both deprives the State of revenues and fosters crime and instability. Finally, the implementation of an effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme will erode from within the strength of unsanctioned armed factions that are responsible for much of the insecurity across Afghanistan and that in many cases resist the extension of government control.

During the past few months, the various activities related to the security sector reform — formation of the national police, training of the national army, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration, reform of the Ministries of Interior and Defence, reform of the national intelligence services and counter-narcotics action — have taken central stage in the work plan of the Afghan Government. At the same time, it is becoming more and more evident to President Karzai and his colleagues, as well as to Afghanistan's partners in the international community, that all these projects are intimately connected and must be very closely coordinated. Meetings to that effect are taking place in Kabul on a regular basis to allow the heads of the national commissions, the various lead nations and UNAMA to come together to supervise cooperation among themselves and push the various programmes and processes forward. To assist Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mr. Brahimi in helping the Afghan Government and the five lead security sector reform nations to achieve their goals, the Secretary-General has recommended the addition of a few military and police advisers to UNAMA.

Administrative development and security sector reform should be coupled with a political transformation process that ensures that the Government is representative and accountable to all segments of the population. As the Secretary-General reported, the drafting and approving of a new constitution and preparations for general elections to be held in 2004 will be key tasks in this regard for the coming year. Elections in particular constitute a linchpin of the process and an essential element of UNAMA's mandate.

Holding elections within the timeline of the Bonn Agreement will constitute a major challenge for UNAMA and the Afghan Transitional Administration. In February, President Karzai formally requested, in a letter to the Secretary-General, that UNAMA play an essential role in the preparation and organization of the election. The Secretary-General is prepared to respond positively to that request, subject to Security Council approval, and, as a result, he is proposing in his report the establishment within UNAMA's Pillar I of an electoral section. Electoral consultants have already been deployed to UNAMA to begin assisting the Government with the election preparation process. Those consultants have confirmed what we have long believed, namely that the holding of a registration and election will be a very complex exercise. We presently envisage an electoral section within UNAMA that will be able to provide expert advice and technical assistance to the Afghan electoral management body on such issues as voter registration, voter education, the development of political party laws and the development of the electoral system itself.

It is clear that a certain amount of institutional development must occur and that an adequate level of security must be in place if the elections are to be meaningful and credible. In addition, elections are a technical activity for which certain international standards must be maintained in order for the elections to be perceived as legitimate. The resources required to meet those standards, over and above the cost of the electoral section with UNAMA itself, will be significant. If elections are to be held according to the Bonn Agreement, it is essential that the UNAMA electoral section be established and be provided with adequate resources as soon as possible. It is also important that the Afghan Government continue to lay the framework for future elections. As Mr. Brahimi said, in his remarks to the Afghan Development Forum on 13 March,

> "It is clear that if the timetable set by Bonn is to be met, it will be necessary to establish a legal and institutional framework for registration within the next 40 days to start urgently the actual work to be able to launch the registration campaign itself during the summer. The appointment of the Afghan electoral body to lead the process is, of course, equally urgent."

More generally, as the Council prepares to renew the mandate of UNAMA, it is opportune to underline again the vital need for strong international political commitment and support to the Bonn process during the crucial months ahead. The neighbours of Afghanistan signed a Good-Neighbourliness

Declaration last year in Kabul. The United Nations, as well as key partners of Afghanistan, were present and expressed strong support for that initiative. The Security Council also welcomed that declaration and confirmed its readiness to lend its support if needed. It is important that all stakeholders actively participate in the implementation of the letter and spirit of that declaration. Member States, donors and international partners in the Afghan peace process may wish to consider further ways to cooperate to support the peace process as a whole.

Finally, I would like, on behalf of the Secretary-General to thank the Council for its steady and consistent support of UNAMA over the past year. We hope, above all, that the Council will maintain the united and focused approach that it has shown so far with regard to Afghanistan and which has been such an important factor in the progress achieved so far.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.